



NEWSLETTER

November 2025

VOLUME 27, ISSUE 11

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE by Rich Ervin

As I promised, there are lots of changes coming this year.

The biggest news is that AMGA has signed a contract with Neon One. Neon One is a customer relationship management tool or CRM. It is a platform that will allow us to integrate all our data in one place thereby allowing us to more easily keep track of members, volunteers, and programs. Broadcast emails, a Directory, club membership renewals, custom dashboards, the newsletter and many more options will be available to us. If you are interested in helping us with this new venture, let us know.

Please consider joining the board. Remember, you do not need any special qualifications or experience. We need people who are interested in our mission, want to help out and provide new ideas and support. We need you!

Troy Weiss is stepping down as vice-president to be an at-large member of the board. We do not have a replacement for him as of yet and are requesting that all Master Gardeners think about taking on his position. Troy has been hugely instrumental to AMGA and its success; he is multi-talented and has been essential to AMGA and will be greatly missed as vice-president. If you are interested please let us know. You will not be alone in your endeavor as Troy will be on the board and will gladly help you in the role.

I am stepping down as president to an at-large board member. It has been a great honor and pleasure to serve

as your president. Thank you for all your support, help and encouragement. I am happy to report that the wonderful, talented and energetic Dawn Groth will be taking over as president if she is approved at our January board meeting. She will bring new ideas, gusto and positive changes to AMGA. I am very excited for her new leadership and what she will accomplish. Please give her your warm welcome, support, ideas and talent.

Thanks to the powers that be, Jan van den Top is staying on as treasurer. His attention to AMGA's finances is unparalleled. I can't say enough good things about him so I'll leave it at that. Please consider getting on the board with a goal of becoming the next treasurer. Jan is going to be around to guide the next treasurer but he needs someone to be there and learn all that he has to offer. Please consider the role of treasurer. He will provide you valuable skills and knowledge.

Diane Peck is going to continue as secretary. She is currently keeping our database current until we get Neon One up and running. How we got so lucky to get her, I don't know, but she is fabulous, is going to stay on and I am super pleased.

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Cover photo: Buena Mulata peppers growing in Deb Blaylock's greenhouse. Photo shared by Deb.

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This board, our volunteers, and committees have been such a pleasure to work with. The talent and ideas that are present with you all is inspiring and impressive. Thank you all for everything you do to make this club special and vibrant. Thank you, thank you, thank you!

Please sign up for the [Advanced Training for Master Gardeners: Soil Management](#). It will start Thursday, January 15, from 6 to 8 pm and run 6 to 7 weeks. There is more information regarding the class in this newsletter.

Please try and attend the November 17th general meeting. We need 20 voting members to approve the new board and make some decisions for 2026.

Don't forget to RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!!

MG CLASS AT LAST?

FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED: A Master Gardener class accessible to Anchorage residents appears to be on the horizon for the first time in more than 2 years. According to state Master Gardener director Casey Matney, the course will begin in December and will be offered online. CES will begin advertising for the class soon. Given that there is limited space available and that there are HUNDREDS of people on the interest list, **vigilance to your email inbox is required if you want to take the class.** [Sign up to receive notice here.](#)

NOTES FROM SEC. PECK

The AMGA Board approved transitioning to the NEON One platform for managing membership and communications. This move will help us automate membership tasks, such as dues renewals and reminders, as well as coordinate newsletter and email blasts to our membership. Neon One was chosen based on extensive research by a select committee and review by the board. An onboarding committee has been established and we hope to have it implemented in early 2026. Our October 20, 2025, General Member Meeting was the perfect way to wrap up another fantastic gardening season! Members came together to share photos and stories from the past year—everything from overflowing vegetable beds and colorful flower gardens to highlights from our summer garden tours.

SEPT. 2025 TREASURER'S REPORT

Balances on 8/31/2025

Checking S-88	\$ 17,755.15
Savings S-2	\$ 5.25
Savings S-29	\$ 17,188.64
CD General 2 year mature; 1/3/27	\$ 11,502.91
CD General 1 year; mature 1/30/26	\$ 10,581.44
Total Assets	\$ 57,033.39

Interest/Dividends	\$186.93
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This month's revenue

Membership	\$58.52
Donations	
Fundraising/Plant sale	
Advanced M.G course	
Total revenue	\$ 58.52

This month's expenses

Grants	\$0
Operations	\$ 127.46
Website Hosting	\$
Website Maintenance	\$295.00
Postage/Box Rental	\$
Fundraising/plant sale	\$816.00
Newsletter	\$ 34.99
Postage/Box rental	\$78.00
Speaker Fees and costs	\$
Total Expenses this month	\$ 1351.45

Balances On 8/31/2025

Checking S-88	\$ 16,462.22
Savings S-2	\$ 5.25
Savings S-29	\$ 17,196.41
CD General 2 Year 2.71%, (1/23/25)	\$ 11,575.39
CD General 1 Year 4.07% (1/30/25)	\$10,688.12

Total Assets on 9/30/25	\$ 55,927.39
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Prepared by Jan van den Top

TRY YOUR HAND AT ROSEROOT by Noah Emerson

Now is a great time to ask ourselves—what should I try growing next year? Perhaps you’ve heard of *Rhodiola rosea*, or roseroot, an exciting new specialty crop for Alaskan farmers. The roots and rhizomes of this plant, which have a pleasant rose-like scent when cut, are cherished by many cultures across the world for their potent medicinal properties. Its uses range from promoting mental and physical rejuvenation by the Nunatsiavut Inuit Peoples of Eastern Canada, to alleviating flatulence by the Evenki People of Siberia. Indeed, emerging clinical evidence suggests that roseroot is helpful in treating a wide variety of health conditions, including inflammation, depression, and chronic fatigue. Known as an adaptogen, roseroot helps the body adapt to mental and physical stress.

Now what does this strange plant have to offer Alaskans? For starters, roseroot is naturally adapted to cold climates. The species is believed to have originated high up in the Himalayan Mountains, having since expanded its range to include much of the Arctic and alpine North. Alaska’s harsh climates are perfectly suited to cultivate roseroot, with little need for heated greenhouses, chemical fertilizers, or intensive irrigation schedules. Promoting the cultivation of cold-adapted species helps make our farming practices more sustainable, as they require less intensive labor and resources than many other non-native crops.

In addition to being well-suited for Alaska’s unique

climate, roseroot is also quite lucrative. According to a study by Persistence Market Research, global sales of roseroot products were worth \$14.1 billion in 2022, with a projected annual growth rate of 9% over the following decade. Alaskan farmers are already making \$60-65 per pound of dried organically-grown root. Clearly, this is a high-value crop that has potential to generate meaningful economic opportunities for local farmers and Alaska at large.

Alaskans can also help conserve this valuable species for future generations. Sadly, anytime a plant is commodified for human consumption it becomes vulnerable to overexploitation—and roseroot is no exception. Due to its growth in global popularity, wild *R. rosea* populations are now severely overharvested. This issue is of particular concern in Southern Siberia and Northwest China, where the majority of large-scale commercial harvests are occurring. Roseroot cultivation will likely play an important role in conserving the species by helping take harvest pressure off wild populations. Here in Alaska, we are uniquely positioned to model a more sustainable system of resource management for roseroot, one that preserves the integrity and longevity of the species while still benefitting from the wealth of gifts that it brings. (Our native species, *R. integrifolia*, has not been cultivated.)

We need more growers—and that is where you come in. Seedlings can be purchased from Al Poindexter at Anchor Point Greenhouse. If you are seeking a wholesale buyer of Alaskan grown roseroot, Alaska Rhodiola Enterprises is a local business that makes tinctures and other roseroot products, founded and operated by Dr. Petra Illig. At the University of Alaska Fairbanks, we are currently developing a quality test to measure the potency of roseroot using advanced laboratory techniques. Such a test will enable researchers to identify the best cultivation practices for maximizing plant potency, and will allow manufacturers to ensure product quality and consistency to their consumers. If you are interested in learning more about this ongoing research, please reach out: nwemerson@alaska.edu

Emerson is a Graduate Research Assistant at UAF.



Cultivated roseroot growing in Kenai . Sometimes the rosea flowers can be red, especially as the flower ages. Jenifer McBeath photo.

GRANT REPORT: YOUR AMGA DUES AT WORK



Planting strawberries at the Grow North Farm children's garden. Cecilia Karoly-Lister photo.

Grow North Farm received \$500 from AMGA to fund the first year of a weekly story time at Grow North Farmers Market. That story time was co-hosted between Kim Cameron from the Mountain View Library and Emanuella Bliss every Thursday evening from 5-6pm, June 26th - September 25th. We also had collaborations from the Alaska Book Mobile and the Anchorage Museum Seed Lab who brought child-friendly agricultural activities such as potato digging or scarecrow making. The hour began with reading a book from the library, then a gardening activity, and sometimes they would sample a vegetable or fruit grown at the farm or nearby. Additionally, we built a small box outside the farm fence for children to grow plants, tear them out, play in the mud, rake, etc, and child-sized gardening tools to encourage play. We also put in a mini free library which had a consistent rotation of books all summer long.

Editor's note: We are awaiting reports from two other 2025 grant recipients. Interested in applying for an AMGA grant? [Find info here.](#)

APPLY: WILDFLOWER GARDEN CLUB GRANTS



Apply by January 31, 2026!

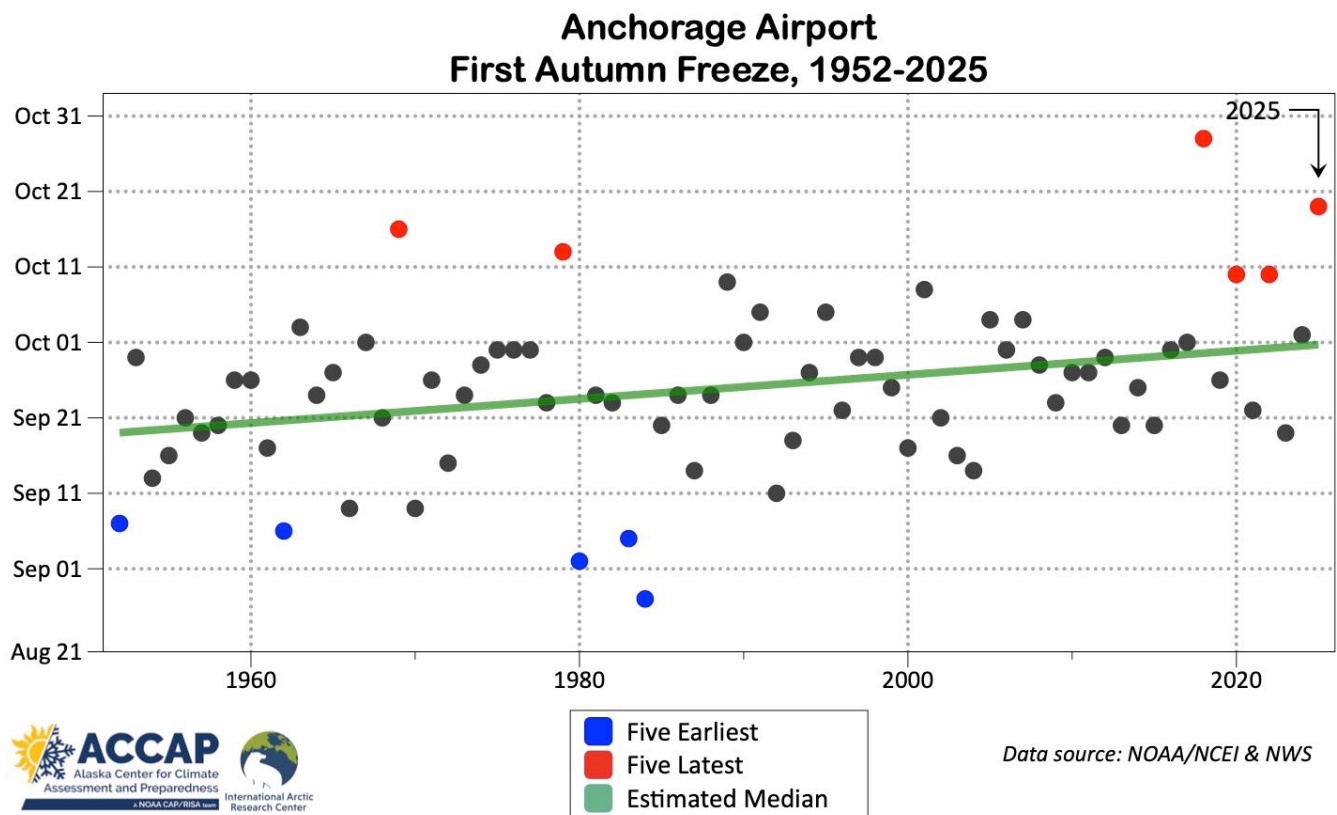
The goal of the Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska (WGCA) Grants Program is to encourage botanical education by funding scholarly studies, scientific research projects, or work in the areas of Horticulture, Floriculture, Landscape Design, Forestry, Botany, Agronomy, and Plant Pathology and/or allied subjects.

[Download the WGC grant application here.](#)

ADVANCED TRAINING FOR MASTER GARDENERS

[Sign up for our in-depth, six-week class for Master Gardeners on Soil Management](#), beginning Thursday, January 15th, from 6-8 PM and continuing weekly on Thursdays at the same time. There will be a seventh optional session during which students in the class may present a project plan based on what has been learned. Feedback on projects will be provided by senior members of AMGA. All classes will be offered via Zoom. Tuition is \$75.00 for the full course. [Click here for the course outline.](#)

FIRST AUTUMN FREEZE OCT. 19



Anchorage Airport finally dropped below freezing early Sunday morning, Oct. 19, for the first time this autumn. This is the second latest “first autumn freeze” in 74 years of climate observations. The typical first freeze is now 11 days later than it was in the 1950s. *Map and caption courtesy Rick Thoman, International Arctic Research Center, UAF.*

Editor’s note: On September 30th, the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States was shuttered due to canceled funding from the National Science Foundation. [Read more about ARCUS and the loss of scientific data and research here.](#)

Nov. Member Meeting

**Business Meeting
November 17th**

**6:00-6:30 mix and mingle, please bring
something from your harvest!**

**6:30-7:30 club business
BP Energy Center**

The November AMGA member meeting will review club business, with important discussions and decisions ahead! Members and the interested public are welcome to attend. We especially need new people interested in joining the AMGA Board.

Herb Study Calendar

The Herb Study Group meets the 2nd Friday of each month from noon to 1:30 PM. The following topics and dates are planned, subject to possible changes. Interested in joining any of the meetings? Email: anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com

November 14 – Turmeric

**December 12 – Aegopodium podagraria
(Bishop’s Weed)**

January 9 – Dill

February 13 – Borage

March 13 – Cottonwood

April 10 – Tea Party TBD

May 8 – Plant Exchange TBD

Join our Meetings

Member Mtgs: 3rd Monday of the month, 6:30 pm, September-May (except December), unless otherwise specified. Free and open to the public.

Board Mtgs: 2nd Monday of the month, 6-7 pm, anyone is welcome to observe. Email president@alaskamastergardeners.org for details.

AMGA Board of Directors

Rich Ervin	President
Troy Weiss	Vice President
Jan van den Top	Treasurer
Diane Peck	Secretary
Merlin Hamre, Brenda Adams, Rebecca Ligler, Roz Goodman, Ellen Kirchner, Dawn Groth	At Large

Committees, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

Casey Matney	CES Master Gardener Statewide Coordinator
Roz Goodman	Broadcast Email
Nick Riordan	Calendar of Events
Board of Directors	Advanced MG Course
TBA	Directory Editor
Kathy Liska	Facebook
TBA	Meetings/Programs
Troy Weiss, Janie Odgers, Rich Ervin	Garden Tours
Mary Rydesky	Google Group Managers
Jan van den Top, Lili Naves, Brenda Adams, Roz Goodman	Grants Program
Lynn Hansen	Hospitality
TBA	Membership Database
Emily Becker	Newsletter Editor
Dawn Groth	Ask a Master Gardener
Board of Directors	Lifetime Achievement
Susan Miller	Pioneer Home Garden
TBA	Volunteer Coordinators
Nancy Grant, Sue Negus	Plant Sale Coordinators

Renew/Join AMGA

Use our [online form](#) or [fillable PDF](#) to join or renew your AMGA membership. By joining, you support AMGA and its mission of gardening education in partnership with the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service. We provide continuing education, grants for garden projects, garden tours, and more, all in service to the community.

Newsletter Submissions

The deadline for submitting an item for publication is the 20th of the month. We welcome educational articles (400-600 words ideal), calendar items and announcements. Educational articles qualify for MG volunteer hours. Contact/send items to the editor at newsletter@alaskamastergardeners.org.

Connect with AMGA

Website: www.alaskamastergardeners.org
 Facebook: facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage
 YouTube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZehJprKkjQzivQvNDKopQ
 Google Group: <https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/AkMGA>
 Membership issues/address updates: rebecca@alaskamastergardeners.org
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